MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
19 FEBRUARY 1964
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MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
19 February 1964

The Commission met, pursuant to notice, at 9:30 a.m., with William Walton, Chairman, presiding.

Present were: Members - William Walton
Gordon Bunshaft
Burnham Kelly
Aline Saarinen
Hideo Sasaki
John Carl Warnecke

Staff - L.R.Wilson, Secretary
C.H.Atherton, Asst.Secy
C.L.Martin, Counsel
Myra Younker, Editor
Leone Vialpando, Recorder

I. SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS-INTERVIEWS

1. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service
National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md. - Extension to
Administration Building - Design Studies

Mr. Rowland Snyder, Director, Design Division, Public Buildings Service, and Mr. David Condon, architect of Keyes, Lethbridge and Condon, presented the project.

Mr. Keyes stated that the addition would be located on the northeast corner of the Institute grounds and would face the Rockville Pike road. The T-shaped nine-story structure would be constructed of precast concrete in five foot modules. Provision would be made for 650 more parking spaces to be added to the existing 550 spaces by either adding them to the parking area on the east side of the building or in a multi-level parking garage. The multi-level garage had not been approved by the Bureau of the Budget.

The members expressed approval of the proposed design for the building but objected to the proposal to park 1200 automobiles in front of it where they would be prominently seen from the Rockville Pike. They agreed that the Commission should disapprove the site plan unless it were altered to approve the multi-level parking garage.

The Chairman was authorized to send a letter setting forth the Commission's recommendation. EXHIBIT A

2. Department of the Army, District Engineer
1500 Man Dormitory, Bolling Air Force Base - Proposed Design

Mr. Oliver Seay, architect of Hayes, Seay, Mattern and Mattern, Colonel E.C. Fletcher, Deputy Chief of Staff for Civil Engineering for Headquarters Command, United States Air Force, and representatives of the office of the District Engineer, U.S.Army, presented plans for a proposed dormitory building to be located on the grounds of the Bolling Air Force Base.

Mr. Seay described the plans and arrangement of the building, a four story brick structure consisting of six wings. The dormitory would house 1500 men in 375 rooms arranged along a central corridor.

Colonel Fletcher explained a site plan for the development of the area which he stated had been approved by the Secretary of Defense and submitted to the National Capital Planning Commission. He stated that approximately 3,000 bachelor enlisted men would be housed on the base in the future and pointed out the existing structures planned for retention and the sites of new dormitory, recreation buildings and other facilities to be constructed. When asked if the site plan had been acted upon by the Planning Commission and if it was in any way in conflict with proposed plans for development of the area to be turned over to the General Services Administration as surplus to Department of Defense needs, Colonel Fletcher replied that he could not answer and did not know what the Planning Commission intended to do with the area.

The Commission agreed that the Chairman should inform the Department of Defense that it would not approve the design of the building until the Planning Commission had approved the proposed site plan. EXHIBIT B

3. District of Columbia Government, Department of Buildings and Grounds

a. Junior High School, 16th and Irving Streets, N.W.-Proposed Design

Mr. G. A. Purcell, Liaison Officer, D.C.Department of Buildings and Grounds, and Mr. Robert Weppner, architect, representing the contract architect Ronald S. Senseman, met with the Commission to discuss the proposed design.

Mr. Purcell stated that the three story school would be constructed on a seven acre site, of which only three acres was available for building purposes - four acres being under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Board. The building would have a school population of 1500 children.

Mr. Weppner explained that the interior arrangement of the building was designed to locate the gymnasium, auditorium and administrative offices along 16th Street. Classrooms and special purpose rooms would be located around a central courtyard in the center of the building.

In the general discussion the members thought the site was too small for a school of 1500. They also agreed that the architecture was poor and required additional study and development. It was concluded that the Commission would not approve the proposed design. Mr. Purcell was asked to resubmit the design with a simple block model showing the site and existing conditions.

The Chairman was authorized to prepare a letter setting forth the recommendations of the Commission. EXHIBIT C

b. West End Branch Library, 24th and L Streets, N.W. - Proposed Design

Mr. G.A. Purcell and Mr. William Woodhouse, architect, representing Albert Goenner, contract architect, presented the design of a proposed two-story branch library to be erected on the northeast corner of 24th and L Streets, N.W. The building would face 24th Street.

In design, the first floor of the building consisted of a series of 36 inch windows surrounded by cast stone frames on the L Street and 24th Street facades, five-foot windows on the east. The second story was shown as a tinted glass curtain wall divided into 20-foot bays. The north elevation would be a party wall without windows. A parking area for automobiles would be located to the east of the building.

The members thought that the design was too complicated for what should be a relatively simple structure. They suggested that the party wall was unnecessary and could be eliminated by rearranging the building so that it faced L Street. They also suggested that a block model be constructed. The proposed design was disapproved.

The Chairman was authorized to prepare a letter setting forth the recommendations of the Commission. EXHIBIT C

4. District of the Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency
Columbia Plaza Urban Renewal Project, 23d-25th St., E St. and Virginia Avenue, N.W. - Proposed Design

The Commission met with Mr. Stanley Sherman, Chief, Project Design, RLA, and Mr. Arthur Keyes, architect of Keyes, Lethbridge and Condon, to discuss the project. Mr. Keyes explained it was hoped that an excavation permit could be secured in the next two or three months to begin construction of the five apartment buildings and a portion of the maisonettes or town-houses. The developers had been unable to obtain a lessee for the hotel and therefore construction of that portion of the project and the maisonettes associated with it would have to be postponed indefinitely.

In the general discussion the members expressed general approval of the arrangement, architectural treatment and choice of color of building materials. They stressed that the hotel and associated maisonettes when

constructed, should be of the same mass and materials so as to complete the proposed development plan shown in the model.

The Chairman was authorized to send a letter to the Director of the Redevelopment Land Agency giving the Commission's views. EXHIBIT D

5. Freer Gallery of Art
Inspection of Proposed Acquisitions

In accordance with the usual custom the Commission visited the Freer Gallery of Art to inspect a number of Oriental works of art proposed for purchase. The Commission approved the items as listed in EXHIBIT D.

Thereafter, at 11:30 a.m., the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

C. L. Martin

C. L. Martin
Counsel

MEETING OF THE COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS
19 February 1964

AM
9:30 I. CONVENE, ROOM 7000, INTERIOR DEPARTMENT BUILDING

II. SUBMISSIONS-REVIEWS-INTERVIEWS

9:35 1. General Services Administration, Public Buildings Service

National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Md., Extension to Administration Bldg. - Design Studies

(Mr. J. Rowland Snyder, Director, Design Div., PBS; Mr. David Condon, architect; representatives of NIH)

10:00 2. Department of the Army, District Engineer

1500 Man Dormitory, Bolling Air Force Base - Proposed Design

(Colonel Fletcher, Commanding Officer, Bolling AFB; Mr. Bradley, Baltimore District Engineer Office; representatives of Hayes, Seay, Mattern & Mattern of Roanoke, Va., architects-engineers)

10:30 3. District of Columbia Government, Department of Bldgs. & Grounds

a. Junior High School, 16th & Irving Sts., N.W. - Proposed Design

(Mr. G.A. Purcell, Liaison Officer, D.C. Dept. of Bldgs. & Grounds; Mr. Ronald Senseman, architect)

b. West End Branch Library, 24th & L Sts., N.W. - Proposed Design

(Mr. Purcell; Mr. Albert Goenner, architect)

11:00 4. District of Columbia Redevelopment Land Agency

Columbia Plaza Urban Renewal Project, 23d-25th St., E St. & Virginia Avenue, N.W. - Proposed Design

(Mr. Stanley Sherman, Chief, Project Design, RLA; Mr. Arthur Keyes, architect of Keyes, Lethbridge & Condon)

11:30 5. Freer Gallery of Art

Inspection of Proposed Acquisitions

PM
12:30 6. Luncheon at Federal Aviation Agency

ADJOURN

4 March 1964

Dear Mr. Boutin:

At its meeting on February 18, the Commission of Fine Arts considered the preliminary design for an addition to the administration building at the National Institutes of Health.

The architects of the original building, Keyes, Lethbridge, and Condon, presented a scheme extending the eastern end of the old building several bays and adding a new wing at right angles, a reasonable solution considering the existing conditions. There seems to be no problem regarding the proposed architectural treatment, but the Commission was concerned over the location of the open parking area where it would completely destroy the view of the new building from Rockville Pike, an important thoroughfare and main approach to the NIH grounds.

We understand the problems connected with finding adequate parking space, but in this instance the location is particularly bad. It would not only detract from the appearance of an individual building but would, by its proximity to the highway, create the wrong tone for the entire campus. Another less important location should be found, or another method of parking used which would preserve the landscape.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

William Walton
Chairman

Honorable Bernard Boutin
Administrator
General Services Administration
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT A

EXHIBIT A

11 March 1964

Dear Colonel Bridges:

At its meeting on February 18, the Commission of Fine Arts considered plans for a 1500 man dormitory proposed at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C. We understand this building is to be the first of several planned for this location and will eventually comprise a permanent installation for personnel now housed in temporary barracks in the Washington area. The replacement of additional tempos comes as welcome news, but when shown the designs for the new buildings, we were disappointed at how closely they resembled some of the existing barracks, except for the use of more permanent materials.

It appears that the design is based on a standard plan with little thought to the particular location and its special demands. This approach may have practical value on other military reservations, but not at Bolling which occupies a central location in the plan of Washington, a fact which ought to be reflected in the character of the new buildings.

We request that additional studies for the new dormitories be developed, giving special attention to the entire group of buildings and how the completed composition will appear. To this end there should be a model that is large enough to indicate how the architectural treatment, landscaping elements, parking, etc. will look in the completed stage.

We have already spoken to Colonel E.J.Fletcher, Deputy Chief of Staff, Civil Engineering, about considering the remaining projects as a single submission while still in the preliminary stage, and he has indicated that he would be glad to do this, probably forwarding designs in time for the April meeting. It would be helpful if the model and additional studies were ready for that meeting.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

William Walton
Chairman

Lt Colonel Wayne W. Bridges
Deputy District Engineer
U.S.Army Engineer District, Baltimore
P.O.Box 1715
Baltimore, Md. 21203

EXHIBIT B

[illegible]

Dear Colonel [illegible]:

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

4 March 1964

Dear General Duke:

I am writing in regard to the designs of a school at 16th and Irving Streets, N.W., and a library at 24th and L Streets, N.W., which the Commission reviewed at its meeting on February 18.

We have discussed these projects with Mr. Purcell of the Department of Buildings and Grounds and have asked him to present them to the Commission again with drawings and models adequate to explain the design.

In order to facilitate the presentations and to be certain we have all the necessary supporting material we are requesting that your representatives and the architects meet with a member of our staff a week prior to the meeting to review the design in detail.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

William Walton
Chairman

Brigadier General C. M. Duke
Engineer Commissioner for the
District of Columbia
District Building
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT C

4 March 1964

Dear Mr. Doyle:

On February 18, the Commission of Fine Arts met with the architects of the Columbia Plaza project in order to review the design prior to its formal submission which is expected sometime this spring.

We concur with the favorable actions taken on previous occasions by the Commission, with the understanding, of course, that the project be completed in its entirety and not in a piecemeal fashion.

I mention this because at our meeting the architect, Mr. Keyes, indicated that the hotel structure might be delayed since no one has been found to operate it. This building is an integral part of the design, especially the section completing the curve along the approaches to the E Street Expressway, and should be built at the same time as the rest of the project.

We would be reluctant to approve any portion of the construction unless we were reasonably assured that this would be so.

For the Commission of Fine Arts:

Sincerely yours,

William Walton
Chairman

Mr. Phil A. Doyle
Executive Director
D.C.Redevelopment Land Agency
Washington, D. C.

EXHIBIT D

EXHIBIT D

COMMISSION OF FINE ARTS

The Regents of the Smithsonian Institution, the Commission of Fine Arts, and Miss Katharine N. Rhoades, or Mrs. Eugene Meyer, as provided in Paragraph 4 of the Codicil to the Will of the late Charles L. Freer, have examined the following objects:

1 Japanese metalwork, Momoyama, 16th century; set of 7 architectural ornaments;

1 Persian metalwork, Sasanian, 4th century; shallow bowl of silver and gilt, raised figures of a Bacchanalian scene;

1 Japanese painting, Edo period, by Soga Shohaku (d. 1781); "A Scholar Returning to his Cottage";

1 Japanese painting, Kamakura period, Buddhist school; Monju;

1 Japanese painting, Muromachi period, by Mototada; lotus;

which have been recommended for purchase by the Freer Gallery of Art by Mr. John A. Pope, Director, and they hereby approve the purchase.

For the Regents of the Smithsonian Institution

WILLIAM WALTON, Chairman 19 February 1964

For the Commission of Fine Arts

EXHIBIT E